



CTR

COMMUNITY TELEVISION REVIEW

SPRING 1991

INSIDE: P♦E♦G Access—Issues & Answers

NFLCP Bulletin Board Use it, or Lose it!

Low use is threatening the NFLCP's BBS. The system was designed to facilitate the exchange of information between NFLCP board, members and staff; to discuss issues facing access facilitators and users; and to provide access to information, present and past, about NFLCP and cable industry activities.

Anyone with a personal computer and modem can call the BBS, which is operated out of Champaign, Illinois by NFLCP member Greg Smith. To access the bulletin board, call (217) 359-9118 and set your modem to 300 or 1200 baud, 8 bits, 1 stop bit, no parity.

The NFLCP also encourages your comments, thoughts and suggestions about the BBS service as its future is being deliberated.

Members wanting more information about the service are invited to contact Greg Smith at the NFLCP Bulletin Board, 917 W. Columbia Ave., Champaign, IL 61821, or call him at (217) 352-9655.

Conference Audio Tapes

Audio cassettes of a number of individual sessions from the 1990 NFLCP Conference in Washington, D.C. are still available.

These include sessions from tracks dealing with public policy, access management, training and outreach, regulatory, boards and commissions, educational, international, fundraising strategies and techniques, new technology, future visions, and community service/nonprofits and access, as well of the keynote addresses.

Cassettes may be purchased individually at \$8 each or in eight-cassette packages for \$56. The tapes are available from Chesapeake Audio/Video Communications, 6330 Howard Lane, Elkridge, Maryland 21227, or call (301) 796-0040, or fax (301) 379-0812 for further information.

NFLCP Job Line

For access jobs across America, call: (202) 882-6128. If you have comments, suggestions, or jobs, please send them to: NFLCP, PO Box 27290, Washington, D.C. 20038.

Volunteer Producers wanted

- to produce segments for "Given Opportunities...", an award-winning, nationally distributed television program.

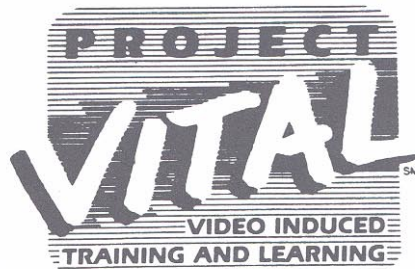


is a video magazine highlighting the abilities of people with developmental challenges such as mental retardation, Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy and autism.



Cable Access Centers

Make your access center "accessible" to more members of the community-- become part of the VITAL network.



is a training curriculum designed to teach basic cable television production to people with developmental challenges.

For more information, contact:
Maggie Lee
Little City Foundation
4801 W. Peterson Avenue
Chicago, IL 60646
(312) 282-2207
FAX: (312) 282-0423

NFLCP Membership Application

*Membership in the NFLCP means active involvement in a network of access users.
Become a builder of the access movement by joining the NFLCP.*

| INDIVIDUAL | | ORGANIZATION ♦ | | TYPE |
|--|---------|---|-------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charter Life | \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> under \$50,000 | \$125 | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit Organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | 100 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50,000–200,000 | 175 | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Institution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional* | 60 | <input type="checkbox"/> 200,000+ | 250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate | 30 | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend | 15 | ♦ Yearly budgets | | <input type="checkbox"/> For-profit Organization |
| * Professional includes access center staff, administrators, consultants, etc. | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Cable System |
| | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Name/Organization _____
Please Print

Contact Person _____
Organization Members Only

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone () _____ Fax _____

Information gathered from this section is confidential and for demographic purposes only. Completion is optional.

| SEX | | ETHNIC ORIGIN | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Make your check/money order payable to **NFLCP**

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PO Box 27290, Washington, DC 20038

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CTR

SPRING 1991
VOLUME 13, NUMBER 5

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Community Television Review is published bi-monthly by the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers. Send memberships, address changes and inquiries to: NFLCP, PO Box 27290, Washington, D.C. 20038-7290. Telephone (202) 829-7186.

Address advertising inquiries to: Community Television Review, 25 Commerce SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-4103.

Bulk orders for additional copies are considered on a case-by-case basis. Contact the national office for rates and delivery.

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Cover photo by Richard Nixon

From the Chair

Positive change is in the air, change which the NFLCP National Board has been working toward for the last four years. The first news is that we have hired a new executive director. I'm pleased to announce that as of April 16, Tony Lewis will be heading up the staff and working with the Board to ensure the future growth of NFLCP and community communications.

Tony has a 20 year background in community based, nonprofit management and we all welcome him. The search committee conducted a thorough, detailed process, with excellent administrative support from GRTV in Grand Rapids.

NFLCP also will be moving to offices closer to downtown Washington, D.C. We are fortunate to have found office space adjacent to the National Federation of Community Broadcasters, our radio counterparts. The new address is 666-11th St. NW; however, the post office box will still be used for mail unless we let you know otherwise.

What has made all this possible is the outstanding work by the NFLCP National Board in reducing the debt and carrying a great workload since 1987. As many of you remember, the NFLCP debt at the beginning of my chairpersonship was over \$160,000. At the end of 1990, the liabilities were reduced to \$20,000, many of which were simply year end bills. This is a remarkable change and there are many people whose efforts have brought us to this point.

These changes also will allow us to more adequately serve your needs and expand our member base. This still depends on your continued support and feedback.

Public policy note! The Senate and House are both considering legislation similar to last year's bills. I can't emphasize enough how critical it is for you to each write to your Congressperson and Senator. Get a friend to write as well. And keep an eye out for upcoming recesses. Seeing your legislator while they are home in the district is the most effective form of communication and advocacy for access.

Finally, welcome to our new CTR Manager Tim Goodwin, as well as this year's Convention Meeting Planners—Meeting Points (Portland). Hometown USA Coordinator Sue Miller Buske reports that they are awash in tapes out in Sacramento and Convention Exhibit Manager Harve Horowitz is lining up another terrific trade show. Thanks also to the continued efforts in the National Office, where Reginald Carter and Ayoka Bryant keep things moving.

Until next time.

Sharon Ingraham, Chairperson

Record Entries for 1991 Hometown USA!

More than 2,000 entries have been received for the NFLCP's 1991 Hometown U.S.A. Video Festival, representing centers large and small from coast-to-coast, according to Hometown Festival Manager Sue Buske.

Preliminary judging of the 2,062 entries will take place April 18-30 at 27 sites across the country, with final judging for the 34 categories set for May 18-20 at Access Sacramento. Finalists will receive written notification in early May.

Winners will be announced at the Hometown Awards Night Thursday, July 25 during the national NFLCP Convention in Portland, Oregon.

The Participate Report

A Case Study of Public Access Television in New York State

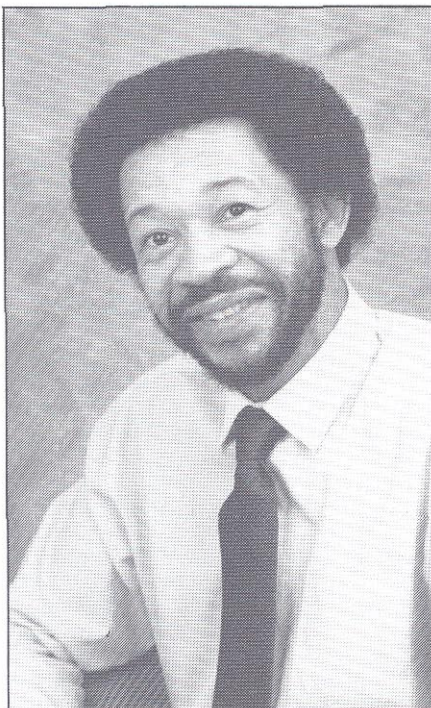
What makes a good public access system tick? The Participate Report helps answer that question. Based on two years of research (and a 90% return rate), the 120-page study provides a comprehensive overview and analysis of how and why access works (or doesn't). The study describes access operations in urban, suburban and rural areas including forms of management, equipment, training, programming, channel time, outreach and publicity.

The Participate Report offers in-depth descriptions of major institutional users of access—colleges and universities, public schools, libraries, arts organizations and artists—with honest critiques of what it takes to make access work for them.

Charts and graphs provide quick overviews of the findings; descriptive and analytical narratives give more detail. Especially useful are the profiles of successful access centers and user organizations. These profiles present the nuts-and-bolts behind these operations. The report also features a chapter on federal and state regulation.

The Participate Report is for policy makers and students of telecommunications as well as experienced and potential community producers and programmers. The report's recommendations will help municipalities negotiating cable franchise agreements, access staff in developing their centers, citizens seeking successful access in their franchise areas, state and local cable commissions wishing to make the most of public access provisions—and any advocates of democratic communications.

Copies of the report are available from the NFLCP for \$20. Write the NFLCP at PO Box 27290, Washington, D.C. 20038.



T. Andrew Lewis

New NFLCP Executive Director

T. Andrew Lewis (Tony) has been named executive director of the NFLCP.

"Tony has a 20 year background in community-based, nonprofit management and we all welcome him," said NFLCP Board Chair Sharon Ingraham, "He will be heading up the staff and working with the Board to ensure the future growth of the NFLCP and community communications."

He will be moving to Washington, D.C. from Inglewood, California, where he was deputy

director of the Southern California Youth and Family Center. Prior to that, he served as an organizational management specialist; executive director of the Fair Housing Congress of Southern California; coordinator for Project SEED; legal consultant to the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination; and director of the St. Paul, Minnesota Urban League.

Lewis received his Juris Doctor from the Boston University School of Law, where he was a King Fellow, and has done graduate work in city planning/administration at Harvard University. He received his bachelor of arts in architecture from the University of California-Berkeley.

Tony begins April 16. Welcome!

New CTR Coordinator

Tim Goodwin of Grand Rapids Michigan, has been awarded the contract for publishing Community Television Review. Goodwin, and his company, City Media, will be responsible for the editing, art production, advertising sales, and mailing of CTR.

A long-time access activist and publisher, he was the founding president of Grand Rapids' public access channel, GRTV, in 1980, and was most recently co-publisher and art director of ON-THE-TOWN Magazine, a monthly arts and entertainment publication in Grand Rapids.

Working with Goodwin will be David Suwal, who will manage operations for the Macintosh-based publishing system.

Inquiries about advertising or articles should be addressed to Community Television Review, 25 Commerce SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-4103, or phone (616) 451-0361.

Think Globally, Tape Locally

Call for Videotapes for the '91 NFLCP National Convention

Voices of Democracy: Celebrating the First Amendment is the theme of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers National Convention in Portland, Oregon July 24-28, 1991. With the participation of people from all over the nation and the world, the event will celebrate freedom of expression and grassroots democracy on this 200th birthday of the Bill of Rights.

You can participate by videotaping short interviews with people in your community. Ask them to identify themselves on tape and answer a few questions such as:

- What does the First Amendment mean to you?
- What does democracy mean to you?
- What do you see as the greatest challenge to democracy?



Submit your testimonial tapes for inclusion in the NFLCP Convention. Preferred formats are 3/4", S-VHS or VHS. Portions of all tapes will be compiled into a video "birthday card" for the Bill of Rights which will be shown throughout the Convention and submitted to the U.S. Library of Congress. Portions of some tapes also will be included in a special *Voices of Democracy: Living the First Amendment Symposium* during the convention. Send your

videotapes by May 20, 1991 to: VOICES Project, c/o Paula Manley, Tualatin Valley Community Access, 1815 NW 169th Place, Suite 6020, Beaverton, Oregon 97006. Please indicate if you would like your tape returned.

Congressional Alert!

Cable Bills Reintroduced in the House and Senate

House and Senate hearings were held last month on cable reregulation legislation. Two bills, HR 1303 and S 12, are very similar to legislation considered by Congress in 1990.

Three important propositions, endorsed by NFLCP, remain missing from both bills. The NFLCP proposes language which would, **1)** require PEG channels be on the lowest tier available to cable subscribers, **2)** permit cities to freely negotiate above and beyond the 5% franchise fee for support of PEG access, and **3)** prohibit cities and access management from controlling content on public access channels, while relieving both parties from any liability over content.

Members are urged to contact their Senators and Congressman/woman *now* to protect this vital right to democratic communication on cable. To write your Senators, address it to: The Hon.____, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510; or to your Representative: The Hon.____, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Satellite Uplink!

The NFLCP's Central States Spring Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan will share a live radio and television uplink with members and centers nationwide Thursday, May 9, 5-6 p.m. EDT, with a live address by featured speaker Ira Glasser, national executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Coordinates for uplinking Glasser's speech are: Ku band, SBS 6, Transponder 6, with live turnaround to C-band, Satcom 4, Transponder 22 (83° W) and the Pacifica Radio Network. A test will be run from 4:30-5:00 p.m. A live call-in will be featured from 5:45 to 6:00 p.m.

The conference's theme is *Powerful Visions: Community TV and the Bill of Rights*. The uplink is being promoted by the Deep Dish TV Network and Pacifica Radio.

Video Olympics

The NFLCP will be participating in the *Olympiads of Local Video and TV Creation*, which will take place January 6-9, 1992 in Beaufortain (Savoie-France). The NFLCP entries will be announced during the Hometown Awards ceremony at the national convention in Portland.

Scheduled one month before the Olympic Winter Games in Savoie, the video Olympiads are designed to further community television and the democratization of the audiovisual media throughout the world. Gold, silver, and bronze medals will be awarded in each of seven categories established by the Olympiad jury.

Among the countries with community television organizations entering are France, Quebec, Netherlands, Great Britain, Ireland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, Brazil, Switzerland, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Australia, Japan, Finland, Norway, China and the United States.

Let Your Fingers Do . . .

The *Yellow Pages* are coming to the NFLCP.

Compiled by Information Services Chair Rick Hayes, the Yellow Pages will be a guide to professional consultants working in areas of concern to access centers, including access television management philosophy, cable system engineering, franchise regulation, non-profit status, marketing and fund development, equipment selection, community needs assessment surveys, and programming choices and issues.

The Yellow Pages should be ready by the convention in Portland, Oregon July 25-27.

Member Directory

Members should have received their new NFLCP Member Roster. Containing some 1100 names of individual members, organizations and institutions, the document is the most complete listing of all of us to date.

Special thanks to Sam Behrend of Tucson Community Cable Corporation for pulling it together; to Ron Cooper and the Far West Region, and Judy Crandall and the Central States Region, for funding the project; and to Reginald Carter at the NFLCP office for packaging and distributing it to members.

If you haven't taken a look yet, now's the time. Address any corrections to the national office for updating.

Regional Conferences

Northeast & Mid-Atlantic, April 19-21, Hartford, CT Contact: Atif Harden (202) 659-6263.

Northwest, April 26-28, Longview, WA Contact: Jack Schommer (503) 667-7109.

Southeast, May 3-5, Atlanta, GA Contact: Ann Flynn (813) 254-2253.

Far West, simultaneous Saturdays, May 4, Hacienda Heights, CA; Oakland, CA; Sacramento, CA contact: Lee Armstrong (415) 459-4260.

Central States, May 9-11, Grand Rapids, MI Contact: Judy Crandall (616) 459-4788.

Public, Educational & Governmental Access Issues & Answers

Tight budgets, controversial programming, shrinking channel capacity, keeping city council happy, shifting of channel number allocations, "turf" battles over limited access resources between public, educational and governmental access operations, and access management transition. These are just a few of the issues which face those organizations and individuals who provide access services in communities all across the United States.

In spite of this constant struggle for survival, access has grown tremendously over the past 20 years. The number of access channels and access centers nationwide now number in the thousands.

It is estimated that there are at least 15,000 hours of new locally produced programming cablecast on public, educational and governmental access channels each week. With replays and imported programming, that number grows threefold.

Much has been learned during these past 20 years about how to manage PEG access in a manner which not only maximizes the quantity and quality of services available to producers, but also in the case of public access protects the producers ability to exercise their First Amendment right to free speech.

This issue of Community Television Review attempts to profile a number of access operations who have dealt with these issues so that we all can gain from their experiences.

The profiles are from both small and large cities; from public access operations as well as educational and government access operations; from places where there is one access management entity handling all three types of access and from places where each type of access is managed by a separate entity.

It has been through the sharing of experiences, both successes and failures that access has managed to survive and grow over the past 20 years.

It is our hope that this issue of CTR can contribute to that collective body of knowledge.

**Sue Buske
Dirk Koning**

Guest Editors-in-chief

The Long and Winding Road to Columbus

by Carl Kucharski

ACTV Executive Director

Columbus, Ohio has always had a unique cable television situation—the home of the Warner Amex interactive Qube system, four systems operating in the city, the first Black-owned system in the country and a franchise fee dedicated to cable related services including access since 1979. So it wasn't surprising that the city considered merging the existing public, educational and government access operations in 1987.

Innovation, however, wasn't the only motivation. The events of the preceding eight years added several other factors which also influenced the merger movement.

In 1979, the city renewed the cable licenses. Columbus does not have franchises or contracts with cable operators. The resulting legislation was a precursor of some of the provisions of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984, especially the deregulation of city oversight of cable subscriber rates and the creation of PEG access. The government access channel, GTC-3, began operating in 1980 and a nonprofit public access corporation, **Columbus Community Cable Access**, ACTV Cable 21, was incorporated.

Its mission until 1984 was to act as a public access advocate and impartial scheduler of programming. Cable operators had the production and equipment responsibilities for public access. Public and government access shared a single channel on basic service. When an education coalition asked for time for educational access programming, ACTV gave it some of its time on the channel. Meanwhile the city was building its own cable interconnect to link all of the operators' head-ends to simultaneously transmit access programming on three separate access channels.

Future Looked Bright. ACTV was contracted by the city in 1984 to assume responsibility for public access. Funding was significantly increased. ACTV had received only small grants from the city prior to this, while raising additional funds through other means. January 1985 marked the inauguration of the public, educational and government access channels, with programming 16 hours a day seven days a week. Public and educational access channels, however, were not on basic service. On the surface, the future of access looked reasonably healthy, but other circumstances were causing the blood pressure to rise in some quarters.

The city administration recommended cutting funding of ACTV in 1985 and 1986 by 60% and 40% respectively, while it proposed to increase funding for government access. The

| COLUMBUS COMMUNITY CABLE ACCESS | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 394 Oak Street, Columbus, OH 43215 • 614-224-2288 | |
| Region | Central States |
| Type | Public Access |
| Staff | 9 Full-time, 2 Part-time |
| Channels | 1 Public Access |
| Operating Budget | \$348,120 |
| Capital Budget | 10,563 |
| Equipment Replacement | 190,931 |
| FUNDING SOURCES | |
| Govt. Ded. Franchise Fees | \$328,736 |
| Sales | 6,822 |
| Services | 19,625 |
| Interest | 3,500 |
| TOTAL | \$358,683 |
| Total Program Hours | 5824 |
| Local 1st Run Hours | 1000 |
| Imports 1st Run Hours | 143 |
| # Cable Subscribers | 215,732 |
| Area Cable Company | Warner, ATC & Coaxial Communications |

funding was restored by the city council. ACTV also was charged a fee by the city administration to transmit public access programming over its cable interconnect—at an average cost of \$13,000 a year. The "appropriateness" of some public access programs was the subject of several high profile news stories, and the city council president expressed concern over the programming focus of the government access channel. The education coalition did not incorporate until 1986 and received no funding from the city.

By the end of 1986, circumstances had turned PEG access into a competitive environment in spite of the growing usage and demand for access by the community.

The City Council established a task force in 1987 to review the situation and make recommendations for the future of access and the interconnect. The task force was to: identify, develop, evaluate and recommend a model for cable access channels and services for the City of Columbus.

It was to be based upon the following criteria:

- provide for and enhance the fundamental principles and goals underlying public, educational and government access channels and programming;
- allow for the enrichment of the Columbus community through cable access services and the viewing of access programming;
- provide a broad and fair representation of the Columbus community;
- provide for input from the city on major policy objectives;
- provide for the use of the access channels without government influence and control;
- provide for the preservation of free speech;
- provide protection from liability for Columbus in regard to cable access;
- provide for the appropriate definition and separation of programming of each access channel;
- provide for maximum, efficient use of cable franchise fees for cable access and other cable services to benefit the Columbus community.

After six months of work, the task force is-

sued a report with its findings and recommendations. It concluded that ACTV "is doing a good job of operating public access"; government access needed to focus more on government programming rather than on entertainment, sports and arts; and that educational access "has suffered greatly from a lack of management and focus."

Other conclusions included that, "the City should not be involved in determining program content on public and educational access" and "...the City should have input into programming, but not control programming content" on government access. Additionally, the franchise fees should continue to be used only for cable related purposes.

The primary recommendation of the task force was to "consider placing the responsibility for the operations, programming, and management of public, educational, and government access under the umbrella of a single nonprofit 501(c)(3) access management corporation." Two alternatives were presented—create a new nonprofit or use ACTV as the foundation and expand its board representation and mission, which would save time and money in organizing the nonprofit.

After a public hearing on the report, the council appointed a second group to recommend ways to implement it. Representatives of the existing PEG access operators and members of the city's cable commission were appointed to the committee.

Mapping the Process. Eleven months later they issued their report, which contained specific suggestions for the proposed PEG access corporation, including a mission statement, articles of incorporation, by-laws, board structure, equipment and facility needs, projected funding levels and first year budget, the need for enabling legislation and check list of actions necessary to make the nonprofit operational.

At the public hearing on this report in April 1989, many concerns were raised. In spite of the committee's statement that much of its report was only an example of how the new organization could be structured, many people were apprehensive about a suggestion to mix programming among the three channels instead of dedicating programming to each channel. Others were confused by the organizational chart, which did not specify how public access programmers fit into the organization. ACTV also raised those issues, as well as the need for a stronger access-oriented mission statement and a resolution to the long term funding for equipment and facilities. Some city officials felt that the identities of the PEG channels would be diluted.

Late in the year the council president called a meeting for all interested parties to discuss and resolve the remaining issues for the merger. Many operational concerns were to be left

to the new PEG board, which was to be composed of two representatives from the three access operations and five members selected at-large by the six access representatives.

The City Council passed the enabling legislation in February 1990, which was promptly vetoed by the mayor because of the lack of sustained participation on the board by the city and the self-perpetuating nature of the board. The legislation was amended in March to allow the Mayor and City Council to review and approve the initial nominations of the five at-large members to the board.

The six access representatives to the new PEG board then incorporated, solicited nominees for the at-large seats, created an interim budget and sought city approval of the at-large nominees. Just as the wheels started to move, political fate stepped in again. The city council president, who had been the primary advocate of the PEG merger, resigned from the council before all the additional legislation could be addressed. The new council president decided she needed time to review the situation. The only bright spot was her statement that ACTV would be fully funded for '91. In the previous four years, ACTV was funded on an interim basis. Instead of four 12-month appropriations, ACTV had to return for funding 10 times, an average of less than 5 months per appropriation.

ACTV's funding level has increased only 8% since 1987 while access services have increased by as much as 40%. The uncertainty of the merger and a strained funding situation took its toll on ACTV's staff. During an 11 month period there was a turnover in six of the nine full time staff positions.

As of March '91, no decision has been made on the merger. This month also initiates the 36 month window on the local franchise renewals, a factor which may influence the decision.

So what are the lessons to be learned?

1. Educate decision makers about PEG access so that if and when this type of situation arises they will have some idea of the complexity of the issues involved.

2. Create an apolitical and inclusive process for the review.

3. Stay focused on the purpose of the potential merger, i.e., the improvement of PEG access for long term community benefit.

4. Create deadlines and adhere to them—keep the process moving.

Mergers of PEG operations may become a national trend. Cities facing difficult financial futures will try to use their revenues, including franchise fees, in what they see as the most effective manner. The '90s will see thousands of franchises up for renewal. Under the '84 Cable Act operators do not *have* to continue direct financial support of PEG access—continuation is on a voluntary basis. That may bring additional pressure by access organizations on those cities not already doing so to use franchise fees for access. ■

South Portland, Where Video Meets the Sea

By Randy Visser
"Captain Video"

People call me Captain Video of the good ship SPTV. In the tradition of the great three masted schooners that sailed from this place during the 16th and 17th Century, I proudly stand on the bridge of a new sailing vessel equipped with 3/4" video tape machines, RF Modulators and a telephone that won't stop ringing.

The **Spring Point Community Television Center** is a five-year-old PEG access facility nestled on the beautiful shoreline of Casco Bay in South Portland, Maine. Aside from the setting, SPTV is like many other PEG access programs across the country.

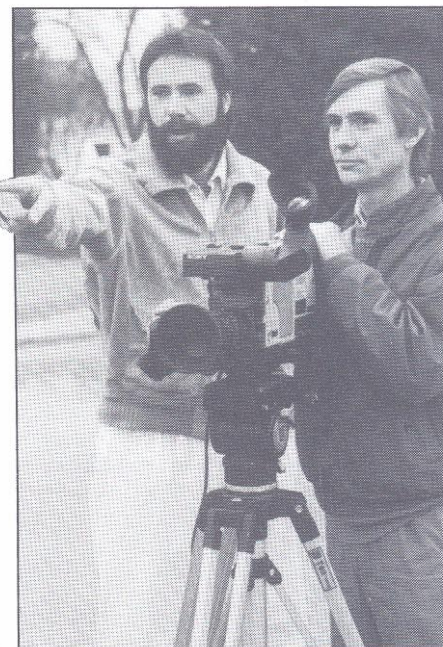
In 1985, the City of South Portland signed a 10-year franchise agreement that included provisions for funding a new community television center. The city asked the local community college, Southern Maine Technical College, to build and manage the access channel and video production facility in exchange for 2% of the local cable franchise fee. The arrangement has worked well, in part, because the college administrators who were responsible for developing the program took some time to study the uncharted waters of community television. They understood that if the TV center was really going to sail it had to first develop a strong "access" program for the community.

It was fortunate for me, as a young video merchant marine looking for adventure in the world of public access, that the school supported my efforts in putting together a crew of community volunteers and college students to help sail the new vessel. As a result, the ship has proved more than seaworthy and the crew has grown together feeding off the benefits each perspective brings to the ship as a whole.

The center has generated over 300 hours of original programming since it opened in March 1986, and a majority of that programming was produced by volunteers and students from the community. SPTV also has proven to be a "flagship" for other access programs throughout Maine and New England, sponsoring workshops, conferences and even state legislation protecting "access to cable" in Maine.

Mirroring Personality. Some of the adventures we've had on our journey so far will sound familiar to many of you. Every access program has its own personality reflecting the philosophy of the people who manage and use it. A thirst for adventure in the world of local politics and a longing to travel the high seas of video production are part of that personality.

As a captain, I have a duty to inspire my crew



Captain Video points the way at SPTV in South Portland, Maine.

and show them the beauty of moving a ship like SPTV through the unknown waters of local community television. After five years of sailing, SPTV has experienced everything from controversial programming to local political power struggles over the channel. One of the most important lessons I've learned through these adventures is that I should have spent more time defining the "mission" of SPTV in the early stages of development. Having a well defined philosophy for the program would have given me and the crew a place to turn to when faced with the unforeseen storms of managing a new public access program.

Combined PEG access channels seem to offer their own unique challenges, like a ship with too many sails. My experience has been that you have to somehow define who the users are and then divide the resources among them. How you divide those resources is always difficult, but if people really want community television they'll find a way to compromise and allow each group of users the flexibility needed to use local TV.

At SPTV we've divided the channel into programming "blocks" which designate time for municipal meetings, educational programming or public access programming. Like any good captain, I bring many of the difficult programming questions to a group of people, called the SPTV Advisory Committee, for feedback and advice. Again, our experience has been that good programming policy should start with a good programming philosophy. Without this direction the members of an appointed advisory committee, commonly made up of people who represent different interests within the access community, will often at-

continued on next page

| SPRING POINT COMMUNITY TV-SPTV | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Fort Road, South Portland, ME 04106 • 207-799-1212 | |
| Region | Northeast |
| Type | PEG |
| Staff | 1 Full-time |
| Channels | 1 PEG |
| Operating Budget | \$42,800 |
| Capital Budget | |
| Equipment Replacement | 125,000 |
| FUNDING SOURCES | |
| Govt. Ded. Franchise Fees | \$42,000 |
| Fundraising | 400 |
| Training Fees | 400 |
| TOTAL | \$42,800 |
| Total Program Hours | 300 |
| Local 1st Run Hours | 56 |
| Imports 1st Run Hours | 10 |
| # Cable Subscribers | 8,000 |
| Area Cable Company | Public Cable Co./ATC affil. |

continued from previous page

tempt to solve the short term problem rather than dealing with the long term issues that may have caused the problems in the first place.

SPTV's Advisory Committee recently revised the original operating policies, something that was needed after five years of operation. There was a lot of public debate and stormy seas for all of us, but the city council finally voted to accept the revisions making it clear that SPTV is a "first come, first served, equal opportunity channel that exercises no control over program content." As a captain, I now know where our ship is headed, and I can steer clear of many the storms without putting us too far off course.

Healthy Discourse. The debate over how to deal with controversial programming on SPTV brought about some initial "bad press" thanks to a young punk rock video producer from the high school and a reporter who was looking for some sensational headlines. In the long run, I think these debates helped people see the potential of having a local channel that will protect "free speech" and serve as a local "communication line," helping people better understand the issues that affect their daily lives. It also demonstrated how difficult it is to operate a PEG channel when the P stands for "punk rock video producers" and the G stands for "government officials".

There are times when I find myself staring out my office window watching the local fishing trawlers make their way in from the wild seas off the coast of Maine. The image of sailing ships and salty dog sea captains may be a bit romantic for some, but I know there are a lot of people who have spent time with me at the helm of this ship, and for them, SPTV will be remembered for the adventures they've had.

Tonight, after a long day of mending sails, building sets and training new volunteers, I'll walk out onto the bridge of the good ship SPTV, gaze out over the still waters of Casco Bay, and smile. ■

Creativity, Diversity & Professionalism in East Multnomah

by Alexander Quinn

General Manager,
Multnomah Community Television

Multnomah Community Television (MCTV) is a non-profit corporation established in 1983. It was created as a result of the cable franchise agreement serving East Multnomah County, Oregon. The MCTV service area includes parts of Portland, the suburban community of Gresham, three smaller cities, and unincorporated parts of the county.

MCTV began at the same time the cable company began construction. The franchise agreement specifically designated the creation of a non-profit organization to carry out the responsibilities for community programming on the cable system. Support for community programming is described in the franchise in specific dollar amounts rather than staffing or equipment, thereby giving the non-profit organization greater flexibility and control over the resources allocated for community programming.

Community Programming. MCTV began with a philosophy of providing a mix of community programming, produced by both the staff and by the public. Initially, staff worked with the local jurisdictions. We began, like many local programmers, with coverage of city council and commission meetings. We also began by working closely with different government service providers—animal control, the sheriff's department, libraries and so on. MCTV approached each of these "clients" with an eye towards what would make good television.

Since MCTV staff are not employees of any one jurisdiction, we have maintained our independence to choose what government programming makes sense for both the governments and the cable subscribers. Municipal staff and elected officials now rely on us as a valuable professional resource in helping them get the word out to local citizens.

MCTV works with educators from the five school districts and community college district within our service area. The citizens involved in planning for our cable system envisioned that cable would provide a great educational resource for the community. The franchise requires that every school be provided cable service free of charge. MCTV works with the schools to provide direct instructional programming, programming of general educational interest, and programs about the schools themselves.

For example, MCTV has worked with the schools to bring prominent authors, economists, elected officials, artists and others into the classroom via cable television. The

| MULTNOMAH COMMUNITY TELEVISION | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 26000 SE Stark St., Gresham, OR 97030 • 503-667-7636 | |
| Region | Northwest |
| Type | PEG |
| Staff | 19 Full-time, 6 Part-time |
| Channels | 8 PEG |
| Operating Budget | \$706,658 |
| Capital Budget | 75,000 |
| Equipment Replacement | 1,150,000 |
| FUNDING SOURCES | |
| Cable Company | \$476,500 |
| Govt. Ded. Franchise Fees | 285,296 |
| Misc. | 19,862 |
| TOTAL | \$781,658 |
| Total Program Hours | 33,384 |
| Local 1st Run Hours | 1,200 |
| Imports 1st Run Hours | 2,000 |
| # Cable Subscribers | 42,580 |
| Area Cable Company | Paragon Cable |

schools have developed curriculum support materials specifically to be used in conjunction with these cable "teleconferences." MCTV works directly with schools to train students in television production. Many educational programs are hosted or produced by students.

It also distributes educational programming produced elsewhere, cablecasting 10-12 college telecourses per quarter in conjunction with the local community college. MCTV carries a variety of programming via satellite such as The Learning Channel, NASA shuttle missions and programming, and national educational teleconferences.

MCTV also produces a number of "community programs," including concerts, forums, sports and other special events.

This year, MCTV began producing a weekly news program, "East Metro Edition." Funding was provided by the cable company in lieu of the company's obligation to produce local origination programming.

Public Access Support. MCTV also provides public access programming along with a comprehensive program of services to support public access. Over 200 workshops every year are offered free to the public, covering all aspects of creating television. MCTV provides on going staff support to the public, assisting with program planning and providing more intensive production training. Equipment resources available to the public include a fully equipped three-camera studio and control room; two edit suites; two multi-camera mobile units for location shooting; and six field camera units.

Over the years, MCTV has tried to develop equitable scheduling of shared resources. Approximately 60% of all locally produced programming is public access. The remaining 40% is a combination of staff-produced programming. This ratio has remained fairly constant as production has increased. MCTV is responsible for programming eight of the 59 channels on our cable system. A mix of all types of programming is carried on two of its channels, thereby providing continuous community programming for the viewer. Two of

the channels are scheduled primarily with educational programming. One channel is used for municipal programming, including city council coverage. MCTV also programs a "community bulletin board" text channel, a promotional channel for MCTV programming and services, a public access channel from neighboring Portland Cable Access, and a regional access channel linking over 270,000 area homes.

MCTV can provide high quality services in all programming areas because of the savings in combining the services under one organization. MCTV has a nine-member board of directors, appointed by the cable regulatory commission. The board, administrative staff, program playback staff, and engineering staff support all programming departments. Specific staff are allocated for the news program, educational programming, municipal programming, and for public access support.

The news program has its own dedicated equipment for field and post production. The news staff is housed in a separate facility; all other programming services are housed together in a facility specifically built for community television on the campus of the local community college. Public access, educational, and government programming departments share playback, studio, multi-camera mobile units and post production equipment. Field units are allocated for either public access or education/government.

Many volunteers have started by working on an MCTV staff production and then gone on to become prolific public access producers. The combination of staff and public access productions contributes to a climate of creativity, diversity, learning and professionalism whereby everyone benefits. ■

Educational Access the Leader in Lubbock

LISD-TV in Lubbock, Texas started in September 1985 in a high school classroom with 12 students, an old VHS camera and recorder, and permission to use a character generator at the cable company six miles away.

Dr. Alice French was hired to develop an access television station for the **Lubbock Independent School District**. She had 15 years teaching experience and produced and hosted a popular daily talk show at the NBC affiliate in Lubbock for eight years and was well known in the community. Because of this, the school administration valued her judgement, experience and leadership capabilities.

When Channel 12 began, Lubbock's general manager, Bob Coleman, was eager to see the enterprising idea put into action. He arranged

| LISD-TV, CABLE CHANNEL 12 | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1323 E. 24th St., Lubbock, TX 79404 • 806-766-1212 | |
| Region | Southwest |
| Type | Educational Access |
| Staff | 3 Full-time, 3 Part-time |
| Channels | 1 Educational Access |
| Operating Budget | \$20,600 |
| Capital Budget | 4,500 |
| Equipment Replacement | 200,000 |
| FUNDING SOURCES | |
| Institutional | \$25,100 |
| Contributions | 8,000 |
| Production Services | 15,000 |
| TOTAL | \$48,100 |
| Total Program Hours | 2115 |
| Local 1st Run Hours | 360 |
| Imports 1st Run Hours | 1175 |
| # Cable Subscribers | 35,000 |
| Area Cable Company | Cox Cable-Lubbock |

a space at the cable company for LISD-TV students to work on a character generator and develop a video bulletin board. Consequently, Dr. French and her students spent many hours working inside the cable company during the first six months of operation. She developed an understanding and appreciation of Cox Cable's day-to-day operation, and the staff at Cox Cable became aware of the efforts for the student television station.

All those involved were highly motivated and excited to be in on the ground floor of an innovative new project.

Small is Beautiful. Dr. French's strategy was to start on a small scale, utilize the channel immediately by assessing the needs of the school district and meeting some of those needs, training school students to do the hands-on operation of the station, and use the educational access channel to communicate public school information. By showing the community the value of an educational access channel; LISD-TV gradually expanded the staff size, facility, equipment, and programming.

Although the station is now in a separate facility and the management has changed at the cable company, the two entities have maintained a mutual respect. LISD-TV strives to provide quality programming which will attract viewers to Cable Channel 12, and Cox Cable-Lubbock maintains the necessary signal quality. Some of Channel 12's students have been employed on a temporary basis to work at Cox Cable; Channel 12 sometimes borrows an extra camera from Cox for four-camera shoots. They remain professional friends.

Over a six year period, LISD-TV has acquired approximately \$200,000 in fixed assets with an operating budget of about \$30,000. This budget is supplemented with corporate gifts and revenue from production services.

Channel 12's professional staff consists of three full-time and three part-time employees.

Today, the professional staff at LISD-TV trains and supervises 40 junior high and high school students who perform many of the jobs at Channel 12 from 4:30 until 7:30 every

evening. Most students work in production positions during live and taped shows. Some students work as talent-hosting shows, anchoring the news and sports, weathercasting, and interviewing guests. A few students assist in preparing our 40-70 page video bulletin board; a few write show promos for regular programming; some serve as playback operators (switchers). Each student has a specific position for a semester and is expected to perform his/her duties in a professional manner. Students receive an elective credit for working at the station a minimum of 5 hours per week.

LISD-TV is a service organization to the school district and attempts to provide that service on as many levels as possible. Obviously, the more people and information included on the channel, the more viewers are attracted to LISD-TV.

Channel 12's video bulletin board dedicates at least one page per school for daily announcements and information from each of the 60 schools in the district and for each major administrative area. Gathering information to fill the bulletin board is worth the time it takes because it helps develop a broad-based viewing audience for the station.

Addressing Needs. Video programming is developed to serve the major groups within the schools. LISD-TV produces a separate weekly show for each of the following groups: elementary students, junior high students, and school personnel (teachers and administrators). High school students produce a live, nightly newscast. At the administrative level, Channel 12 carries all Board of Trustees meetings and public hearings live. Additionally, many special programs are produced for various departments within the school system, i.e., staff development, teacher in-service, fine arts performances, athletics, video yearbooks, etc.

The biggest barrier to face LISD-TV at the beginning continues to be the biggest barrier today. As one might expect, that barrier is lack of funds, which translates into lack of time and staff to perform all the tasks demanded of the educational access station.

Fortunately, station personnel always have had the attitude that they must be flexible and positive in their thinking. The best way to work within a limited budget is to keep an upbeat attitude, work long hours, attract others who enjoy working with the organization, and be creative and flexible. Ascertain the needs of the organization and fill the needs with quality work.

LISD-TV is conservative in its financial goals and generally finds the necessary monetary support within the school district, through corporate gifts and loans, and from revenue earned through the station's production service charges.

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LISD-TV is currently developing a strategic plan for the coming years. It's hoped this plan will result in a larger staff, bigger budget, and expansion of the scope of the station.

Educational access is the access leader in Lubbock, Texas. Use of public access in Lubbock is rare. Government access is operated through the city's public information office, producing one half-hour program each week on Cable Channel 36. Government access and educational access in Lubbock seldom have opportunities to work together, although they operate as friendly professional colleagues. ■

Transformation and Expansion at Tucson

By Peter Treistman

Asst. Professor of Media Arts,
University of Arizona

& Sam Behrend

Executive Director,
Tucson Community Cable Corporation

PEG access in Tucson, Arizona has been radically transformed and expanded through the efforts a task force of PEG cable users.

The task force used the summer 1990 sale of the Tucson cable franchise to bring about a \$4.2 million buyout of the cable operator's public access and local origination obligations under the city's master operating agreement.

The buyout and concurrent changes in the mission and structure of the **Tucson Community Cable Corporation** (previously public access only), combined with a new sense of cooperation and commitment by institutions and independent producers, have resulted in exciting new projects and significant new directions.

These include joint projects between TCCC and the University of Arizona to bring public affairs and documentary programming to access channels, cooperation between the Arizona Center for the Media Arts and TCCC to establish a film transfer facility, arts programming produced for cablecast by students at Pima Community College, telecourses that turn homes into classrooms and many others.

Breaking Barriers. The "cable active" community in Tucson is trying new things, forming new alliances, and moving forward quickly on a number of fronts. There is a growing sense that the walls are coming down. From "us and them", the discussion among the parties involved in PEG access are increasingly seeing themselves as just "us".

Most of these changes are directly related to the buyout of the cable operator's local origination and public access obligations under the Tucson franchise agreement, and the

| TUCSON COMMUNITY CABLE CORPORATION | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 124 E. Broadway, Tucson, AZ 85701 • 602-624-9833 | |
| Region | Mountain States |
| Type | Public/Educational |
| Staff | 20 Full-time, 4 Part-time |
| Channels | 4 Public Access |
| Operating Budget | \$735,000 |
| Capital Budget | 222,000 |
| Equipment Replacement | 1,200,000 |
| FUNDING SOURCES | |
| Cable Company | \$735,000 |
| Govt. Undedicated Fees | 68,400 |
| Contributions | 20,000 |
| Grants | 50,000 |
| TOTAL | \$873,400 |
| Total Program Hours | 19,325 |
| Local 1st Run Hours | 1,688 |
| Imports 1st Run Hours | 436 |
| # Cable Subscribers | 85,000 |
| Area Cable Company | Tucson Cablevision-Intermedia |

meeting of minds that took place during the months of negotiation that led to the buyout.

The new structure in Tucson has several key facets:

- **Funding for public access programming** was secured and a system of grant pools was established for educational users and independent producers.

- **Seed money** was set aside to begin the process of building an endowment for public access operations and community programming grants.

- **A portion of future cable license fees** may be designated by the City of Tucson to help build the endowments for community programming and public access.

- **Tucson Community Cable Corporation** was restructured to include community programming. TCCC's 15-person board of directors was reconstructed to include six designated seats for educational and community entities, and nine seats to be elected by TCCC members.

Under the granting program established for community programming, four pools of funds were set up. They are for: the University of Arizona, Pima Community College, K-12 public schools, arts and independent producers, and health and human services. The pools will each disburse approximately \$50,000 per year. A smaller pool will make health and human service grants. The grant application procedure will be competitive, require match and be designed to avoid conflicts of interest.

Public access funds have been set aside in a separate pool that will be drawn on to cover the operations and capital needs of TCCC.

Government access programming remains separate and is produced by agencies of the City of Tucson.

The establishment of the grant pools and the restructuring of TCCC to include designated seats were designed to bring educational institutions, the art community, and independent producers under a community access umbrella that also includes public access. The structure will encourage economies of scale and synergistic cooperation.

A particularly important characteristic of the Tucson approach to PEG access, as developed by the Cable Task Force, is that the entities involved have independent production capabilities and expertise. TCCC personnel are not producing the PEG access programming. The concept in Tucson is to use the competitive granting process to bring efficient production directly serving community interests.

Superchannel. Perhaps the singular greatest example of how the ideals are being actualized is in the formation of a community "superchannel." The superchannel will be a curated, promoted, "best of" the 14 existing community PEG channels. It also will be a vehicle for the cablecasting of new programming funded from the new grant pool funding. But most exciting is that the superchannel will be interconnected to a second cable system serving an additional 45,000 homes in the Tucson metro area.

This two year process was extremely difficult because of a long history of territoriality and tremendous barriers to cooperation. But now there is a strong, cooperative, and growing united effort to maximize resources to meet the community's cable programming needs in an effective and cooperative way which should create political and fiscal stability for all PEG players. ■

At HOM(e) in Meridian Township

by Ben Stark

HOM-TV Cable Coordinator

HOM-TV Channel 22 is the government access cable television station serving Meridian Charter Township in Okemos, Michigan, about five miles east of Lansing. The call letters of our station were selected to conjure up an image of local programming, hence, the pronunciation "Home-teevee". The letters also reflect the villages of Haslett (H) and Okemos (O), which are contained within the Township of Meridian (M).

Channel 22 has been allocated for use by the township government since 1978, when cable was installed in Meridian, but the TV Department experienced rapid development soon after hiring its first full-time cable coordinator in late 1984.

The facilities of HOM-TV are typically modest, including two 9'x16' rooms which are used for master control, origination, editing, equipment storage and office space. There is no true "studio", but the offices are located adjacent to a low ceilinged meeting room, which is converted for studio use on a daily basis. HOM-TV operates on a 3/4" format, with Beta as a "lingering dinosaur", and VHS as a "blooming alternative". Productions are shot

with Sony 8 ("chip") cameras. Editing is "cuts-only", with two Sony RM-440's. Graphics come from a Chyron VP-2, and our on-line character generator is an Amiga 2000. Remote shooting is performed with either of our two 3/4" porta-pacs, the Sony V06800 or the Sony V08800. Most of this equipment was acquired through an equipment grant as part of refranchising in 1988.

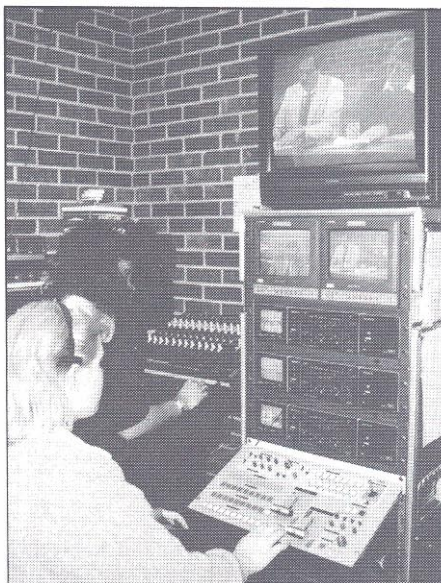
Programming Diversity. HOM-TV features a diverse program schedule, with a primary focus on live and tape-delayed coverage of government meetings. This coverage includes an average of eight live meetings per month, with an average length of three hours each. To supplement this standard government access function, HOM-TV produces a weekly half-hour magazine program entitled "Meridian Magazine". Since the program's inception in 1985, there have been 250 editions.

HOM-TV staff also produces three weekly half-hour talk shows on a variety of subjects. "Inner View" features township staff and officials, "Top Of The Class" features outstanding High School students from the Township, and "Speaking Of Travel" features two local travel consultants providing information about the travel industry, including interviews with local travelers about their trips.

There are three other talk-show series which could best be described as "half-time" in frequency. "Township Today" is hosted by members of the township board who have been given a half-hour every other week to do whatever they want on television. "Supervisor's Spectrum" is hosted by the township supervisor under the same format. "Who's Who" is hosted by the Township Clerk, also under the same format. These programs were mandated into existence by the cable commission in August 1988 to accommodate significant political pressure by the elected office holders to have special programming privileges.

HOM-TV produces other programming as well. "The Police Report" series features the community relations officer of the Meridian Township Police Department discussing public safety and crime prevention issues. This individual also arranges for special guests from the law enforcement community to appear on the show. (This series could best be described as half-time). "The People's Forum" is a special program designed to give local residents the opportunity to gather and discuss local issues with unlimited opportunity to speak. This is a live, panel-based show, nine produced since January 1990.

HOM-TV has been managed since late 1984 by a full-time cable coordinator, Ben Stark. Stark was assisted by part-time students from Michigan State University until September 1989, when a full-time TV production manag-



Live and tape-delayed coverage of meetings are a major part of HOM-TV's schedule.

er, Matt Ottinger, was hired. A third full-timer, TV Production Manager Amy Leahy, was hired in September 1990. The staff still includes two part-time production assistant positions.

Interns are Key. Perhaps the most unique element of HOM-TV is the successful internship program which has been in place for six years. HOM-TV is fortunate to attract students from nearby MSU to fill approximately 12 to 15 non-paid positions in the intensive internship program. Requirements for these positions include a minimum schedule of 15 hours per week, and a minimum two consecutive terms in the program (six months). These people are the core of the staff, and it is a time consuming effort to continually recruit, select and train students to do the full range of production work available through the program. Much of the HOM-TV program schedule is produced with 80% or more of the work done by non-paid interns. Many of the interns exceed the minimum requirements for effort, and HOM-TV would not be the same without them.

Relations with the cable company since the mid-80's have improved dramatically. Customer complaints in 1985 were so severe and time consuming that the township board eventually levied fines against the company for franchise violations. Soon after the fines were assessed, a new management team was installed, and the problems with service gradually decreased to moderate levels.

Cooperation between the PEG channels in this area has been minimal to nonexistent. There is no staff for the educational channels, and consequently there are no projects on which to cooperate. The public access channel has equipment and facilities far in excess of what HOM-TV has to work with, and does not express interest in working cooperatively in any but the most superficial sense.

The HOM-TV budget in 1985 was around \$50,000. By 1988, this figure had increased to \$75,000. The budget for 1991 is \$157,000. While financial constraints have been greatly reduced since the "early days" of this operation, philosophies adopted years ago are still followed by staff members who have seen the organization through the gradual budgetary increases. There is no "trick" to stretching your budget except to stretch your mental attitude to the most positive position possible. Use the equipment and facilities you have to the greatest advantage without becoming pre-occupied with what you don't have.

HOM-TV occasionally receives complaints and criticism for choosing to adopt a broad programming perspective beyond purely governmental topics. This decision was made years ago due to two factors: **1)** the low initial response rate from governmental staff to offers and suggestions to produce television; and **2)** the local programming "gaps" in existence due to the lack of educational access programming and weaknesses in public access programming.

The cable commission has been working for several months on adoption of a "mission and vision" statement, with accompanying goals and objectives, in response to the discontent on the part of some people with the HOM-TV programming approach. Passage of this document is expected to lead to policy formulation that will bring greater clarity to the focus of HOM-TV programming.

It may not be unusual in government access circles to mention that HOM-TV staff are frequently caught in a precarious position between forceful elected officials full of specific ideas on how things should be done; the cable commission, which is responsible for policy formulation and adoption; line-of command supervisors with official responsibility; and the ever-present sense of conscience regarding the right and wrong decision to make and subsequent actions to take. This pressure has been notably worse since the 1988 election. Perhaps it will naturally reduce after the 1992 election (we can only hope). ■

| HOM-TV, CHANNEL 22 | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 5151 Marsh Rd., Okemos, MI 48864 • 517-349-1232 | |
| Region | Central States |
| Type | Government |
| Staff | 3 Full-time, 2 Part-time |
| Channels | 1 Government |
| Operating Budget | \$121,000 |
| Capital Budget | 14,800 |
| Equipment Replacement | 130,000 |
| FUNDING SOURCES | |
| Govt. Ded. Franchise Fees | \$121,000 |
| TOTAL | \$121,000 |
| Total Program Hours | 2,439 |
| Local 1st Run Hours | 375 |
| Imports 1st Run Hours | 5 |
| # Cable Subscribers | 9,000 |
| Area Cable Company | United Cable |

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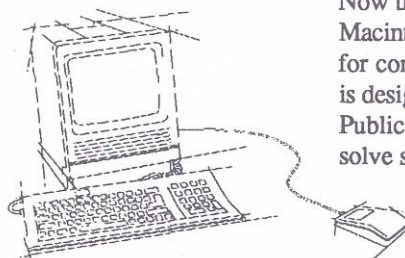
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